

Career Clusters Connect Employers with Education



Partnerships involving states, schools, educators, employers, industry groups, and other stakeholders are creating curriculum guidelines, academic and technical standards, assessments, and professional development materials for 16 career clusters:

- Agriculture & Natural Resources
- Architecture & Construction
- Arts, A/V Technology & Communications
- Business & Administration
- Education & Training
- Finance
- Government & Public Administration
- Health Science
- Hospitality & Tourism
- Human Services
- Information Technology
- Law & Public Safety
- Manufacturing
- Retail/Wholesale Sales & Service
- Scientific Research & Engineering
- Transportation, Distribution & Logistics

These 16 clusters represent all career possibilities. They are an ideal way to organize instruction and

student experiences in Tech Prep, career academies, work-based learning programs, smaller learning communities, magnet and charter schools, and high schools that are restructuring around career themes. The partnership approach gives business and industry a seat at the table, helping schools ensure that students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary for multiple career options within each career cluster. Partnerships are already developing the tools to support five clusters; all 16 clusters will be supported by the end of 2000.



“Students who participate in the IT cluster at the high school level and meet the required standards—in information support and services, interactive media, network systems, or programming and software development—are better prepared than other students to enter the workforce and to continue their education at the post-secondary level.”

— John L. Hall, Senior Vice President, Oracle University

“Because of my internship and what I learned in my Health Science courses I was able to obtain a position as a physical therapy aide while pursuing my degree in physical therapy at the university.”

— a university student majoring in physical therapy

Career Clusters Deliver Multiple Benefits

High schools can be organized around career clusters to prepare students to meet the demands of postsecondary education and the expectations of employers.

Educators can use a curriculum framework that can be adapted to meet local needs. Assessments will be developed for each cluster, which educators can use to gauge how well they are

Employers and industry groups can partner with schools to contribute to the development of high academic and technical standards that help students prepare for work and help workers keep their skills up-to-date. Employers gain workers prepared to learn new skills, adjust to technological change, and advance in their careers.



Parents can learn what academic and technical courses their children need for college and a variety of career fields. Clusters and the high standards that go with them reassure parents that their children will be fully prepared for college and the workplace.

Students can use career clusters to investigate a wide range of career choices. The career cluster approach makes it easier for



meeting the academic and career needs of all

students, regardless of their interests or employment goals. Professional development materials for teachers and counselors will also be developed for each cluster.

Guidance counselors can use career clusters to help students explore options for the future. Current information on the academic, technical, and college requirements students need for a wide range of careers will be developed for counselors in each cluster.

“Career clusters assist counselors in individualizing students’ education plans to help students achieve career goals.”

— Nancy Fleming,
Assistant Superintendent,
Davis (UT) School District

students to understand the relevance of their required courses and helps them select their elective courses more wisely.